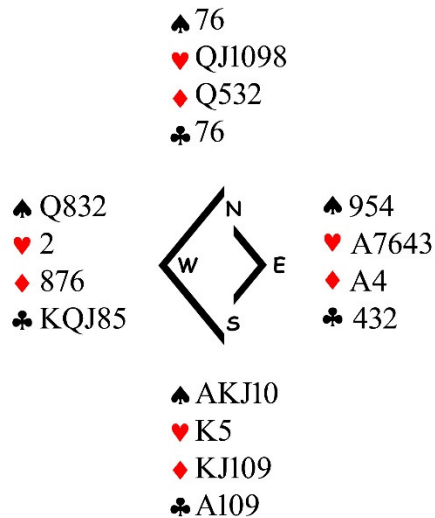


210. Now That We Have Said Adios

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N	E	S	W
		1 ♦	P
1 ♥	P	2NT	P
3 ♥	P	3NT	All Pass

--East West Vulnerable--

In the last column, I recommended that nobody uses Mexican unless they know the entire system well. Their declarer play should also be exceptional for the occasional impossible contract when partner is bust.

They also have to be under the misconception that a weak two Diamonds is not worth bidding because the opponents seem to bid over it easily. However, taking away bidding room when the opponents are very likely waiting to bid is very important.

The bidding:

South opens One Diamond with his balanced 19 points. North has five points and five hearts, and because of his Diamond holding, he bids One Heart. People actually tend to do the opposite. If partner opens One Diamond and one is short in Diamonds, one feels the urge to bid and save partner. This is wrong. Bidding should be driven by fits not misfits. North bids with five points, while most will pass, because he has a five-card major and four cards with the Queen in partner's suit. Furthermore, all of his points are in his two long suits.

Opener jumps to Two No Trump. It is important for South to skip a four-card major, to get to One No Trump first and to show partner his point count. Partner will "check back" with New Minor Forcing if he wants to force to game and inquire about the major holdings. Three Clubs, the new minor, is forcing to game while Three Diamonds and Three Hearts show a minimum and are to play. Partner may still continue to 3NT, as does South, at his own peril. The King of Hearts, three Tens and 19 points spur him to Three No Trump.

The Lead: King of Clubs is clearly the best lead.

The play:

This is a very important example of the holdup play for both the declarer and the defense. Declarer must holdup in Clubs twice, taking his Ace on the third round. The defense must holdup once in hearts and try to keep the Queen of Diamonds from becoming an entry.

After winning the third round of Clubs, declarer must drive out two Aces and pray that West does not have any of them. Fortunately, East has them and exits a Spade both times. Declarer never takes the Spade finesse because he still needs Heart and Diamond tricks. One should try to avoid losing slow losers, such as the Queen of Spades, when losing quick losers such as two Aces, gives one the contract. Declarer loses two Clubs and two Aces for nine tricks.

Result:

Three No Trump making three for +400.